

# THE PARISH POST

NOVEMBER 2009

**St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**4200 Londonderry Road, Harrisburg, PA 17109**  
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**The Rev. James E. Person, 717-695-7525**

## FROM THE PASTOR

**<sup>4</sup>A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. <sup>5</sup>That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another.**  
**(Romans 12:4-5 Contemporary English Version)**

Those of you who were in attendance at the 11:00 service on October 18<sup>th</sup> heard me say how impressed I am at how many people are a part of making St. Mark's a vital and active congregation. Of course, I have always been aware of the number of folks who are involved in this congregation, but that day it seemed to become especially apparent. It was as if the Lord had opened my eyes to realize something wonderful that had been there all along.

That Sunday we had the usual involvement of all the different groups and individuals to which we have become accustomed. The chancel choir, musicians, acolytes, ushers, lectors, communion assistants, Advent choir, and behind the scenes folks like altar care were doing, had done, or were waiting to do their part to make our worship meaningful and fulfilling. We even had the special privilege that Sunday of the gift of song shared by Jan Alloway, who wrote a beautiful piece of

music, and her daughter Jill Tshudy who sang it for us. All in all, I was overwhelmed with the gifts God has given to our members and friends and the joy with which they (you) share those blessings with us.

Perhaps it was the same kind of experience that led St. Paul to write to the church at Rome about the many parts of the body working together. Throughout his letters Paul uses "body language" to talk about the Church. In Paul's image, Christ is the head of the body and we are the parts that make the body work. It is a wonderful thing to see how those "body parts" come together in ministry here at St. Mark's.

Just as our physical bodies need care and exercise to keep them healthy, the same is true of the Church. If any part of the body is neglected or left inactive for too long it begins to weaken. We must constantly be exercising the ministry of our congregation to keep it vital and strong.

God has wonderfully designed our physical bodies so that when we put them to work they become stronger to meet the demands placed upon them. Some of this strengthening comes from the formation of new cells to bolster those that are doing the work. In the same way, we see folks in the church step in when needed to bolster those who are actively involved in ministry. Perhaps God is calling you to be one of these "strengthening cells" here at St. Mark's. There is

<b>PURPOSE STATEMENT - St. Marks is a church that</b>	
<b>P</b> raises God	Worship
<b>R</b> elishes Relationships	Fellowship
<b>A</b> cts as God's Ambassadors	Evangelism
<b>Y</b> earsns to Learn	Discipleship
<b>S</b> erves God and Our Neighbors	Ministry

always room for more “muscle” when it comes to exercising the ministry of the church.

Unfortunately, the Body of Christ shares another thing in common with the human body. While some work strengthens the body, if a part is overworked it can become weaker rather than stronger. Some time of recovery and nourishment is necessary to allow for strengthening to take place. A part or person who never has the opportunity to, or never takes the opportunity, to recover eventually needs to take some time for rest and restoration.

Also, doing the same exercise over and over for an extended period of time can fatigue a part of the body to the point that it needs a rest or a change of pace in order to remain healthy. We have several folks at St. Mark’s who have blessed us with excellent ministry for a number of years and would now like to give others the opportunity to share their gifts in the same way. I am sure we have many very well-qualified people with the gifts of leadership who would thrive in those positions. Again, prayerfully consider if God might be calling you to take a more active role in the ministry of our congregation.

Every part of the body is important; every part of the body needs every other part of the body, and all the parts of the body need to be healthy and active for the whole body to work at its best. What part of the Body of Christ at St. Mark’s are you? What exercise will you join in to help this body remain healthy and strong?

Your partner in Christ’s mission,  
*Pastor Jim*



*Betty Briner congratulating her husband, Skip on his 1st pitch at the Senators, Dementia & Alzheimer’s Awareness, game August 30, 2009*

*Photo courtesy of Susan Simpler*

## COUNCIL PRESIDENT

*The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God.*

*No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.*

Excerpts from Abraham Lincoln’s Thanksgiving Proclamation, October 3, 1863

As we enter this season of Thanksgiving, we reflect on the blessings we’ve received. How shall we give back to God what He has first given us? His gifts are many and varied, and we can give to the church in as many ways. We also give when we serve our neighbors and the world in Christ’s name.

St. Mark’s will be considering stewardship during the month of November. So often in the church, “stewardship” is a code word for financial giving. This is certainly an important part of the operation of a congregation, from the staff, to maintaining the property, and perhaps most important, providing for the ministry of the church. It is also a challenge in these economic times. But also think about how we are stewards of God’s creation. And how we help meet the needs of our neighbors, similar to how a ship’s steward sees to the needs of the passengers.

I invite you to prayerfully reflect on how you will respond to God’s abundant blessings.

In His service,  
*David Stanton*

## W/ELCA NOVEMBER SCHEDULE

THERE WILL NOT BE A UNIFIED MEETING ON MON NOV 9, 2009. A Thankoffering will be taken during the Esther Circle Meeting. Eve Circle Thankoffering will be on Nov 24.

Nov 3 – Sewing & Project Day 9:30 AM  
 Nov 10 – Esther Circle 9:30 AM  
 Nov 24 – Eve Circle 7:00 PM

## THANK YOU NOTES

Dear St. Mark's Family,

Thank you for all the prayers, cards and the flowers. Pastor Jim for his prayers and visit.

God Bless,  
*Harry Roat*

Dear Friends,

My daughters and I want to thank you for all the support you have given us these past weeks. We want to thank Pastor Person for his hospital visits, while I was in surgery and afterwards.

A special thank you to Judee Leister and her committee of excellent cooks, who provided delicious meals on my return home. We appreciated the varied and most generous servings. Thank you, also, to the Esther Circle for the beautiful fall flower arrangement and for all your calls and words of encouragement. Equally, to our church family, thank you all for your prayers, cards, flowers and calls of inspiration. It is especially reassuring to hear from you all.

Sincerely,  
*Julie Rowe*

Dear Friends of the Esther Circle,

Thank you for the spectacular fall flower arrangement that arrived while I was hospitalized. The flowers are still in amazing bloom, and hold a special place on my table, where I can see them daily.

Also, I want to thank you all for your kindnesses, your cards, calls, and visits. Above all, thank you for lifting me up to our Father in prayer.

It's a humbling experience to be on the receiving end of the cares and concerns of my church friends.

In gratitude and with love,  
*Julie Rowe*

**SOCIAL SERVICE MINISTRY** will once again collect non-perishable food items to be used in our Holiday Food Baskets. With the state of our economy today some people are having a difficult time feeding their families. We can help in this small way by gathering food items to help them during the holiday season. We will begin collecting the food items on November 1st and continue till November 22nd. You may place your items in the containers at either entrance to the church. Remember that Jesus fed thousands on a few fish and a couple loaves of bread. We can help a few with our donations and a few can have a brighter holiday. We thank you in advance for any help you can give us.

## CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT COLONIAL PARK MALL

This will held on Monday, December 14, 2009 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Candy Canes and an Invite Card will be given to shoppers. St. Mark's members will be singing Christmas Carols. We will meet next to Santa in center court. Dress brightly for the season. Sign-up sheets available at both entrances. Your voices are needed. We also have a wonderful time. Come join us. All congregation members and friends are invited.

## NEW ADDRESSES

### FRANK & SUE DILLAHEY

3200 Sutton Drive  
Harrisburg, PA 17112  
717-657-2538

### JANET PETER

7731 Althea Ave  
Harrisburg, PA 17112

## YOUTH GROUP

- 1st — Youth Group Meeting 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.  
14th — Rakin' Leaves (Service Project) 9:00 a.m.  
(Have a name or address of someone in need?)  
15th — Youth Group Meeting 6-8:30 p.m.  
21st — Parents' Day Out (Find some friends, families we  
can serve!!) 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
28th — Young Adult Gathering 5:00 p.m. Worship at  
Grace in Camp Hill 6:15 p.m. Dinner

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Susan Bergner  
3 Pastor Jim  
Maryann Gelehrter  
Eric Smithers  
4 Susan Smith  
7 George Kaufman  
8 Thomas Stohler  
9 Scott Minarich  
Betty Minarich  
Vaughn Heym, Jr.  
Trenton Minarich  
10 Brent Whitaker  
12 Melissa Tremblay  
14 Richard Botts  
15 Marion Trautman  
Donna Tressler  
Killian Lewis  
17 Floyd Sholder  
18 Gary Schwartz  
19 Ellen Wenrich  
20 Sandra Dinger  
22 Heidi May  
Margaret Shillingsford  
24 Christine Wnuk  
Tracey Swetnam  
25 Dennis Niehenke  
27 Donald Gutshall  
28 Ryan Cleaver  
30 Xavier Scrbacic

## ST. MARK'S BOOK CLUB

<u>Date</u>	<u>Book</u>	<u>Author</u>
Dec. 3	The Noticer	Andy Andrews
Jan. 28	Mr. America	Mark Adams
Feb. 25	The Secret Life of Bees	Sue Monk Kidd
Mar. 25	The Last Lecture	Randy Pausch
Apr. 22	The Lucky One	Nicholas Sparks
May 27	Velva Jean Learns to Drive -	Jennifer Niven
June 24	Joshua: A Parable for Today -	Joseph F. Girzone
July 22	The Devil in the White City -	Erik Larson
Aug. 26	Amish Grace	Donald Kraybill

We meet in the parlor at 10 a.m. on the dates listed.  
Everyone is welcome to join us for our discussions.

## STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

**LET US GIVE THANKS.** . . Please join us for a Potluck  
Brunch" November 22, 2009 following the 11 AM  
service. Plan now to join us for this time of fellowship  
as we celebrate God's abundance in our lives!

*The Stewardship Ministry*

## ADVENT DAY APART

December 5, 2009 at The Wittel Farm. All are invited to  
a day of prayer and meditation in preparation of the  
birth of the Christ child.

There is a \$15 registration fee. Lunch will be provided.  
Please call 717-677-8211 or visit  
[www.LutheranCamping.org](http://www.LutheranCamping.org) to register by November  
28.

## WOMEN'S CRAFT RETREAT

November 13 - 15, 2009 at Nawakwa. Projects are  
provided and you may bring your own to work on!

Registration fee \$125. Please call 717-677-8211 or visit  
[www.LutheranCamping.org](http://www.LutheranCamping.org) to register by November  
6. Meals, lodging, and most supplies provided.

## ST. MARK'S NURSERY SCHOOL

One Friday Pastor Jim came down (on his day off) to read the Bible story to the children. When I told the four year olds that he was coming down they wanted to know what was upstairs. Normally I take the children to the sanctuary in Nov. with our canned food collection but I decided to use this teachable moment and take a grand tour of the church. We began by visiting Kim in the office and continued to Pastor Jim's office to see and hear his singing deer. We then entered the sanctuary and met Betty Briner , the church organist. After Pastor Jim explained what was in the church, Betty invited the children to come to the organ and not only hear a few notes but to play a few notes as well. The children sat in the pews and looked at the books and listened to the lovely music. What a special field trip this was. We continued the tour of the lower part of the church and ended our tour. I do believe that every child had a special morning. We especially thank Betty and Pastor Jim for this special day. I know the children will be eager to take the canned goods to the sanctuary at the end of Nov.

Thank you to everyone who registered at Karns or Giant and designated St. Mark's Nursery School. Last year we generated over \$1,000 with donations from these stores. If you have not done this at this point, please take a moment to do so. We really appreciate your help.

Lynn Oliver  
Director  
3 & 4 year-old Teacher

Our Two Year Olds are coming along wonderfully. They have adjusted to school so well, are enjoying their group and craft times, and are feeling safe and happy in our class. They are making friends with each other at playtime and it just warms your heart to see how they are starting to respond to each other in a good way.

November will be filled with many turkey crafts that teach them to recognize their names and colors. We will also do our Bible stories on giving God our thanks for our family and friends, and all the blessings He puts in our life.

We go to the playground when the weather is warm and the children really love to go out and play on all

the apparatus. They ask to go all the time so this has brought a lot joy to them. We will not be going out much now that the weather is changing but we do have gymnastics on Thursdays to keep up with exercise and motion songs on Tuesdays.

The school year is off to a wonderful start with great children and parents. They are a blessing to us in so many ways!

Carole Jean Johnston  
2-year-old Teacher

## SPECIAL DATES

- All Saints' Day, *November 1, 2009*
- Daylight-Saving Time ends, *November 1, 2009*
- Veterans Day, *November 11, 2009*
- Christ the King Sunday, *November 22, 2009*
- Thanksgiving Day, *November 26, 2009*
- National Bible Week, *November 22 - 29, 2009*
- First Sunday of Advent, *November 29, 2009*

## EXTRAVAGANZA

Items needed:

Picture frame glass  
Glass Goblets  
Tea Cart  
Decon's Bench  
Twin size bed spread

Anyone interested in sewing contact Betty Shook. Next meeting of the Extravaganza Committee is November 9. The Craft Artisans will not be meeting Thursday, November 26.

**YOUR 2010 GIVING ENVELOPES** will be available in the Narthex on Sunday, November 29th. Please make sure to stop and pick yours up!

## THIS IS WHAT THE EVANGELISM MINISTRY DOES!

NOTICE TO COUNCIL: A new Evangelism Chairperson will be needed in January of 2010. It has been a privilege to serve in this Ministry for about 10 years. Due to declining health, I will not be able to be chairperson. Thank you to all members who have served to share God's Love. St. Mark's members are Friendly and Welcoming visitors to St. Mark's. Help and information will be shared with members willing to continue the Evangelism Ministry.

*Alice L. Houck*

### THE FOLLOWING ARE ACTIVITIES OF THE EVANGELISM MINISTRY

Bring a Friend Sunday, Election Day, Nursery School.  
 Outreach to Neighbors Voting with refreshments and an Invitation to Worship.  
 Welcome Packets to new children in fall.  
 Christmas Packets with Invitation to Worship at Christmas.  
 Easter Packets with Invitation to Worship at Easter.  
 Help with Bake Sale table at Bunny Breakfast.

COLORFUL BROCHURE ABOUT ST. MARK'S: Pastor Person uses them for Visitors and New Members.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING AT COLONIAL PARK MALL - Give Candy Canes and Invite Card.

GIVE COLD WATER TO PEOPLE AT CHURCH EVENTS - Yard sales, Youth car wash, etc. & an Invite Card.

OUTDOOR SIGNS - Be sure changes are made by local sign company and that signs are placed & removed by Property Ministry. Order new signs when needed.

BREAD DELIVERY TO VISITORS - Keep supplies current, remove pew Register Sheets, replace sheets, record visitor information and deliver bread to visitors.

BREAD BAKERS

CHRISTMAS CARDS - (Members send to members).

CHAIRPERSON FOR EVANGELISM

BULLETIN BOARD & PHOTOS OF EVANGELISM EVENTS

MEMBERS to make visitors feel welcome - invite them to return - sign Friendship Register - report to Pastor Person any request they may have.

CARETAKERS OF PEW RACKS - several members do this. They replace Prayer Request sheets, etc., sharpen pencils, replace Register pads and pens as needed.

ST. MARK'S NEEDS YOU! In your serving you will be obeying the Great Commandment. (Matthew 22:37) Jesus said: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind . . . Love your neighbor as yourself."*

PLEASE PRAY AND CONSIDER HELPING WITH THIS MINISTRY. ST. MARK'S NEEDS EVERYONE TO BE A PART OF GODS MISSION.

Any questions please call Alice Houck at 545-1058.

## SEEKERS CLASS - NEW CURRICULUM

If I'm heaven-bound, does earth matter? It's a real problem, no matter your political stance. The earth is being damaged by human activity.

Christians have a complex relationship with God's creation. We have tangled up our concepts of dominion and stewardship. Many imagine eternal life means being whisked away to some other non-physical plane in the ether. In trying to be God-focused, Christians become heaven-focused, at the expense of our earthly home. Can scripture and our own religious tradition help us rethink those relationships? Is there a model for care of the creation that doesn't force us to the polarized margins?

The Seekers Sunday School class will be contemplating these questions in a six-week study entitled "EarthBound." Using Martin Luther's understanding of justification and vocation, this study will help us to discover the origins of our misconceptions about Scripture's portrayal of creation, recognize God's call to us to relate to the whole creation as our vocation, and experience how God's people throughout the Church are living out that call.

The sessions will be as follows:  
October 18: Created/Called (justified and free to serve the world)

October 25: Here/There (creation is earthly, material and good)

November 2: Domination/Dominion (above creation, or part of it?)

November 9: Atoms/Organisms (identity in social context)

November 16: Now/Forever (short-term benefit, or eternal creation)

November 23: Enough/Too Much (scarcity and abundance)

Please join us in the Parlor Sundays at 9:45 a.m. All are welcome!

## OUT OF MY MIND.... random thoughts from my overactive brain

Well, it's fall, and football season is upon us once again. My beloved Steelers, after a bit of a rough start, appear to be getting themselves together – although every game has been an adventure. Who knows what things will look like by the time this newsletter is in your hands?

My son Taylor knows that I am a die-hard Steelers fan. Most people who know me fairly well know this about me, because I frequently wear Steelers shirts and I talk a lot about the team and the games. Taylor says he can pretty well tell how the Steelers are doing (even though he's upstairs in front of a computer, not watching the TV) by how much yelling I do at the TV. I can't help it – I'm very invested in the Black and Gold, a loyalty that goes back to my childhood. I could no more ignore the Steelers than I could ignore .....well, God. I can't imagine being without either one of them.

But this makes me wonder: Do the same people who know that I'm such a huge Steelers fan also know that I'm a huge GOD fan? If being a Christian were a crime, would there be enough evidence to convict me? If not, then I'm not doing a very good job of being a Christian, am I?

I have never appreciated being "hit over the head" with other people's religion, so I tend to be pretty quiet about my own so as not to offend people. However, that doesn't mean that I shouldn't live out my faith and my beliefs in a way that demonstrates how my faith and my beliefs inform my life. As one of my favorite posters puts it: "Preach the gospel. If necessary, use words."

Who's your favorite sports team? I bet a lot of people could name yours. Now tell me, do you think they know what religion you practice, or what church you go to? Don't you think they should?

April Trout

**ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
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**St. Mark's Church Council**

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